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872	Title: 2004 Spring Wild Turkey Harvest - Check Station Results	7/16/04

Abstract: Hunters harvested 10,765 wild turkeys in 78 of the 90 counties open to hunting compared to 10,366 birds harvested in 2003. The 2004 harvest was a new high and a 4% increase over 2003 and a 2% increase over the previous high of 10,575 birds in 2002. The majority of the birds were harvested in the earlier part of the season and the morning hours. The proportion of juveniles in the harvest (24%) was slightly less than the mean of the previous 10 years.

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The 35th wild turkey hunt was held 21 April to 9 May 2004, with special hunt days at Camp Atterbury held earlier. Harvest data was collected at 312 check stations throughout the turkey range. Hunters harvested 10,765 wild turkeys in 78 of the 90 counties open to hunting during the 19-day season. The 2004 harvest was a new high and a 4% increase over the 10,366-bird harvest of 2003 and a 2% increase over the previous high of 10,575 birds in 2002. Counties with high kills (≥300 birds harvested) were Switzerland (436), Perry (940), Jefferson (396), Harrison (381), Warrick (370), Greene (359), Parke (346), Dearborn (325), Franklin (324), Orange (317), Crawford (306), and Spencer (301) (**Table 1**). Approximately 56% of the kill occurred during the first 5 days of the season with 33% occurring on weekends (**Figure 1**). Approximately 72% of the kill occurred by 1000 hrs and 80% by noon with 13% occurring after 1500 hrs (3 pm) to sunset (**Figure 2**). Unlicensed landowners/active military personnel and nonresident hunters respectively accounted for 8% and <3% of the harvest.

Based on spur measurements taken at check stations, juvenile gobblers (1 yr-old birds commonly referred to as "jakes") made up 24% of the 2004 harvest; 2 yr-olds (49%); 3+ yr-olds (27%) (**Table 2; Figure 3**). Average bird weights were up slightly, with Jakes averaging 15.8 pounds while the average 2 yr-old weighed 21.4 lbs and ≥3 yr-olds weighed 22.8 lbs. The overall proportion of jakes (24%) was slightly less than average with the majority of hunters taking adult gobblers (76%).

Reasons for the 4% increase in harvest are speculative at best but probably, in general, reflect a continued increase in the turkey population and turkey hunter numbers. The number of hunters and their success rate currently cannot be estimated for 2004 until license sales are reconciled but it is suspected that hunter success was around 23% with an estimated 46,000+ hunters afield this spring (**Table 3**).

Special thanks goes to Roger Hunter, Mitchell office, who put together the check station materials and to Clare Moser and Becky Wilson, Bloomington office, who handled the check station returns and data entry. Acknowledgment also goes to the 312 volunteer check station operators for their efforts and cooperation in collecting the harvest data.



Table 1. Indiana wild turkey harvest by county, spring 2003 and 2004.

County	2003 Reported* Harvest	Percent of Harvest	2004 Reported* Harvest	Percent of Harvest	Difference from prior year	Percent Change
Adams	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0%
Allen	7	0.1%	2	0.0%	-5	-71%
Bartholomew	91	0.9%	89	0.8%	-2	-2%
Benton	7	0.1%	2	0.0%	-5	-71%
Blackford	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	-1	-100%
Boone	4	0.0%	0	0.0%	-4	-100%
Brown	194	1.9%	232	2.2%	38	20%
Carroll	4	0.0%	6	0.1%	2	50%
Cass	31	0.3%	31	0.3%	0	0%
Clark	292	2.8%	277	2.6%	-15	-5%
Clay	104	1.0%	99	0.9%	-5	-5%
Clinton	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	-1	-100%
Crawford	320	3.1%	306	2.8%	-14	-4%
Daviess	91	0.9%	110	1.0%	19	21%
Dearborn	304	2.9%	325	3.0%	21	7%
Decatur	36	0.3%	26	0.2%	-10	-28%
DeKalb	28	0.3%	34	0.3%	6	21%
Delaware	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	1	0%
Dubois	191	1.8%	205	1.9%	14	7%
Elkhart	17	0.2%	18	0.2%	1	6%
Fayette	46	0.4%	39	0.4%	-7	-15%
Floyd	63	0.6%	70	0.7%	7	11%
Fountain	146	1.4%	166	1.5%	20	14%
Franklin	308	3.0%	324	3.0%	16	5%
Fulton	40	0.4%	41	0.4%	1	3%
Gibson	105	1.0%	110	1.0%	5	5%
Grant	1	0.0%	4	0.0%	3	300%
Greene	316	3.0%	359	3.3%	43	14%
Hamilton	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	-1	0%
Hancock	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	-1	-100%
Harrison	387	3.7%	381	3.5%	-6	-2%
Hendricks	3	0.0%	3	0.0%	0	0%
Henry	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	-
Howard	3	0.0%	4	0.0%	1	33%
Huntington	35	0.3%	23	0.2%	-12	-34%
Jackson	209	2.0%	218	2.0%	9	4%
Jasper	28	0.3%	36	0.3%	8	29%
Jay	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	-
Jefferson	383	3.7%	396	3.7%	13	3%
Jennings	267	2.6%	248	2.3%	-19	-7%
Johnson	19	0.2%	35	0.3%	16	84%
Knox	61	0.6%	51	0.5%	-10	-16%
Kosciusko	22	0.2%	18	0.2%	-4	-18%
Lagrange	54	0.5%	89	0.8%	35	65%
Lake	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	-2	-100%
LaPorte	122	1.2%	140	1.3%	18	15%
Lawrence	284	2.7%	293	2.7%	9	3%

* Harvest totals from check station reports.

Table 1 continued on next page.

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County	2003 Reported* Harvest	Percent of Harvest	2004 Reported* Harvest	Percent of Harvest	Difference from prior year	Percent Change
Madison	0	0.0%	4	0.0%	4	-
Marion	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0%
Marshall	125	1.2%	168	1.6%	43	34%
Martin	250	2.4%	217	2.0%	-33	-13%
Miami	19	0.2%	21	0.2%	2	11%
Monroe	187	1.8%	230	2.1%	43	23%
Montgomery	39	0.4%	64	0.6%	25	64%
Morgan	52	0.5%	48	0.4%	-4	-8%
Newton	61	0.6%	67	0.6%	6	10%
Noble	11	0.1%	11	0.1%	0	0%
Ohio	172	1.7%	137	1.3%	-35	-20%
Orange	322	3.1%	317	2.9%	-5	-2%
Owen	221	2.1%	218	2.0%	-3	-1%
Parke	301	2.9%	346	3.2%	45	15%
Perry	373	3.6%	401	3.7%	28	8%
Pike	250	2.4%	268	2.5%	18	7%
Porter	11	0.1%	11	0.1%	0	0%
Posey	79	0.8%	90	0.8%	11	14%
Pulaski	39	0.4%	55	0.5%	16	41%
Putnam	135	1.3%	134	1.2%	-1	-1%
Randolph	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0%
Ripley	287	2.8%	236	2.2%	-51	-18%
Rush	Not Open	NA	Not Open	N/A	N/A	NA
St. Joseph	54	0.5%	78	0.7%	24	44%
Scott	182	1.8%	154	1.4%	-28	-15%
Shelby	Not Open	NA	Not Open	N/A	N/A	NA
Spencer	292	2.8%	301	2.8%	9	3%
Starke	135	1.3%	189	1.8%	54	40%
Steuben	146	1.4%	179	1.7%	33	23%
Sullivan	239	2.3%	284	2.6%	45	19%
Switzerland	462	4.5%	436	4.1%	-26	-6%
Tippecanoe	50	0.5%	52	0.5%	2	4%
Tipton	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0%
Union	49	0.5%	58	0.5%	9	18%
Vanderburg	5	0.0%	6	0.1%	1	20%
Vermillion	125	1.2%	124	1.2%	-1	-1%
Vigo	106	1.0%	114	1.1%	8	8%
Wabash	52	0.5%	53	0.5%	1	2%
Warren	134	1.3%	114	1.1%	-20	-15%
Warrick	396	3.8%	370	3.4%	-26	-7%
Washington	319	3.1%	288	2.7%	-31	-10%
Wayne	37	0.4%	25	0.2%	-12	-32%
Wells	3	0.0%	2	0.0%	-1	0%
White	15	0.1%	22	0.2%	7	47%
Whitley	2	0.0%	9	0.1%	7	350%
Unknown			53	0.5%	53	
Totals	10,366	100.0%	10,765	100.0%	399	4%

* Harvest totals from check station reports.

Figure 1 Harvest by Day of 2004 Season

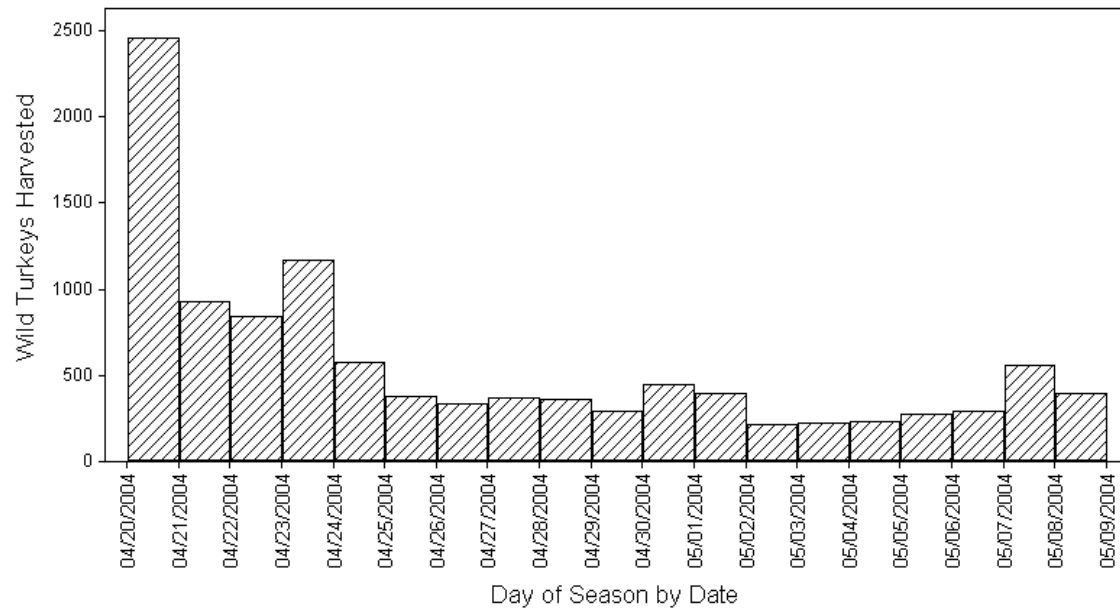


Figure 2 Time of Kill 2004 Turkey Season

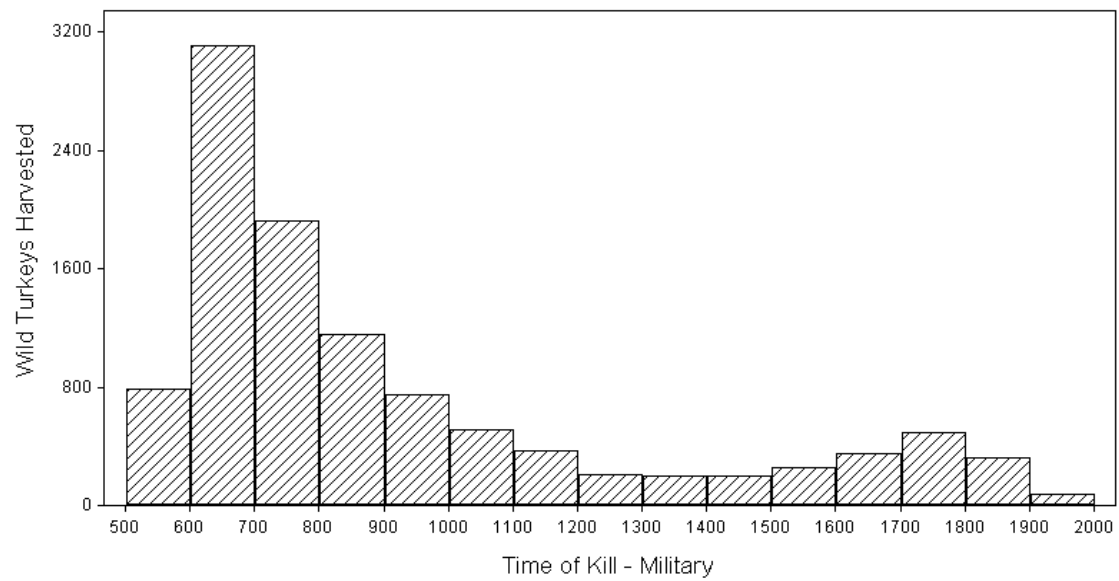


Table 2. Composition of Indiana's spring gobbler harvests, 1970-2003.

Year	Reported Harvest	Age Class Percentages*		and Mean Weights (lbs)			
		1Yr	Wt.	2Yr	Wt.	3+Yr	Wt
1970	6	0%		33%		67%	
1971	11	9%		9%		82%	
1972	12	0%		17%		83%	
1973	27	4%		37%		59%	
1974	26	15%		27%		58%	
1975	15	7%		20%		73%	
1976	32	22%		19%		59%	
1977	46	17%		26%		57%	
1978	33	33%		18%		48%	
1979	48	47%		29%		25%	
1980	54	33%		38%		29%	
1981	90	29%		20%		51%	
1982	73	21%		19%		60%	
1983	93	34%		38%		28%	
1984	104	32%		39%		29%	
1985	255	40%		39%		21%	
1986	293	29%		41%		30%	
1987	741	24%		44%		32%	
1988	905	45%	15.4	39%	20.7	16%	21.8
1989	1,359	20%	15.5	63%	20.7	17%	22.2
1990	1,505	31%	15.2	41%	21.0	28%	21.9
1991	2,318	25%	15.5	53%	21.1	22%	22.2
1992	2,531	38%	15.1	43%	20.8	19%	22.2
1993	3,500	18%	15.9	60%	20.9	22%	22.4
1994	3,741	41%	15.2	37%	21.2	22%	22.4
1995	4,706	28%	15.6	55%	20.6	18%	22.1
1996	4,859	24%	15.6	53%	21.6	23%	22.7
1997	5,790	21%	15.7	56%	21.5	24%	22.7
1998	6,384	22%	15.5	51%	21.1	28%	22.5
1999	6,548	25%	15.5	49%	21.1	26%	22.6
2000	7,822	27%	15.2	44%	20.7	28%	21.9
2001	9,975	26%	15.7	50%	20.1	24%	22.1
2002	10,575	27%	15.7	47%	21.3	27%	22.5
2003	10,366	24%	15.3	49%	21.3	28%	22.4
Previous Years' Means **		26%	15.5	49%	21.1	25%	22.4
2004	10,765	24%	15.8	49%	21.4	27%	22.8

* Based on longest spur measurement

** Mean percents and weights based on previous 10 years.

Figure 3
Harvest Age Structure 1980-2004

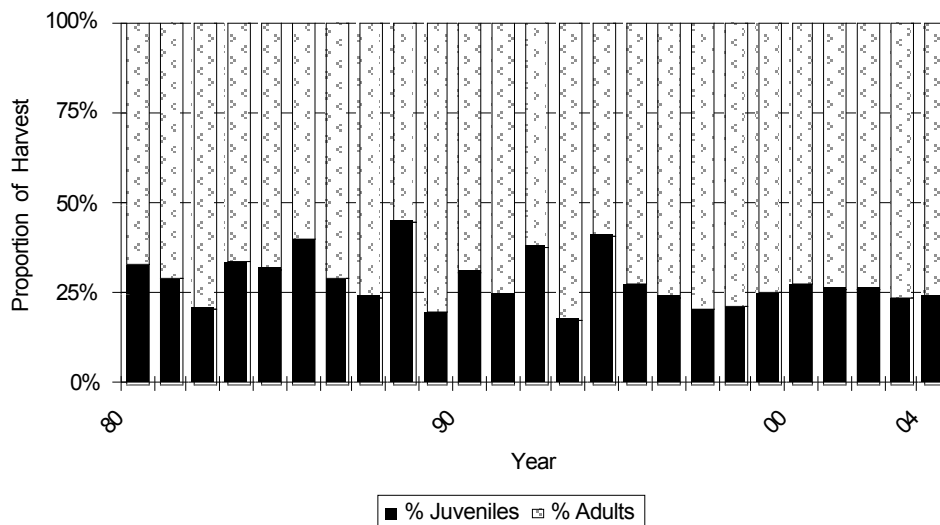


Table 3. Summary of Indiana's wild turkey hunting seasons, 1970 to 2004.

Year	Regular Season Dates	Season Length (Days)	No. of Counties	No. of Permits Sold*	Est. No. of Hunters**	Reported Harvest	Hunter Success
1970	5/2-5/5	4	3	75	62	6	9.7%
1971	5/1-5/5	5	9	298	224	11	4.9%
1972	4/26-4/30	5	9	585	422	12	2.8%
1973	4/25-4/29	5	11	625	503	27	5.4%
1974	4/24-4/28	5	11	665	496	26	5.2%
1975	4/29-5/5	7	11	722	501	15	3.0%
1976	4/29-5/5	7	13	666	500	32	6.4%
1977	4/28-5/5	8	16	668	520	46	8.8%
1978	4/26-5/7	12	18	852	619	33	5.3%
1979	4/25-5/6	12	19	932	860	48	5.6%
1980	4/23-5/4	12	17	706	670	54	8.1%
1981	4/22-5/3	12	18	922	814	90	11.1%
1982	4/21-5/2	12	18	1,125	696	73	10.5%
1983	4/20-5/1	12	18	1,218	984	93	9.5%
1984	4/25-5/6	12	18	1,320	1,205	104	8.6%
1985	4/24-5/5	12	25	1,882	1,302	255	19.6%
1986	4/23-5/4	12	25	2,523	1,648	293	17.8%
1987	4/22-5/6	15	33	3,348	2,619	741	28.3%
1988	4/27-5/11	15	33	10,894	4,677	905	19.4%
1989	4/26-5/10	15	39	11,442	6,068	1,359	22.4%
1990	4/25-5/9	15	39	14,379	7,860	1,505	19.1%
1991	4/24-5/8	15	43	16,387	9,643	2,318	24.0%
1992	4/22-5/6	15	43	18,735	13,110	2,531	19.3%
1993	4/28-5/16	19	48	21,078	15,673	3,500	22.3%
1994	4/27-5/15	19	48	23,357	18,622	3,741	20.1%
1995	4/26-5/14	19	52	28,858	20,861	4,706	22.6%
1996	4/24-5/12	19	52	28,733	21,442	4,859	22.6%
1997	4/23-5/11	19	74	32,703	23,085	5,790	25.1%
1998	4/22-5/10	19	74	32,889	22,876	6,384	27.9%
1999	4/21-5/9	19	74	38,730	27,285	6,548	24.0%
2000	4/26-5/14	19	74	40,801	28,615	7,822	27%
2001	4/25-5/13	19	74	43,815	36,103	9,975	28%
2002	4/24-5/12	19	90	44,333	37,919	10,575	28%
2003	4/23-5/11	19	90	48,857	42,328	10,366	24%
2004	4/21-5/9	19	90	50,839	46,267	10,765	23%
2005	4/27-5/15	19	92	50,839	50,206	11,500	23%

* Since 1987 totals include lifetime licenses and since 1988 youth licenses sold from Jan-May.

** No. of hunters includes those permit holders who hunted >= 1 day and since 1986 has been adjusted for non-licensed landowners or military hunters.

Bold italics = preliminary estimates based on projecting previous years' trends or means while also accounting for potential effects of regulation changes.